

Coffee-houses Vindicated

I N A N S V V E R

To the late Published

C H A R A C T E R

O F A

C O F F E E - H O U S E

Asserting

From *Reason, Experience, and good Authours*, the *Excellent Use, and Physical Vertues* of that *Liquor*.

With

The grand *Conveniency* of such civil places of *Resort* and *Ingenious Conversation*.



L O N D O N,

Printed by *J. Lock* for *J. Clarke*. 1673.

Indicated by arrows

REVEREND

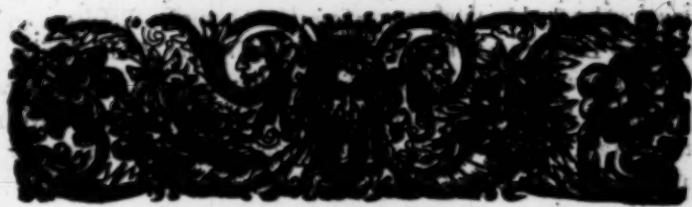
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of the University of Cambridge

and of the University of Oxford

1852



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IN

A N S W E R

To the late Published

Character of a Coffee-House.



It of late is grown so wanton, and the humour of *Affecting* it, become so common, that each little *Fop* whose spongy Brain can but coyn a small drossy *Yogue*, or two, presently thinks himself priviledg'd to *Asperse* every Thing that comes in his way though in it self never so *Innocent*, or *beneficial* to the Publick; To the Influence of this predominant *Folly*, we may not improperly refer the Production of those swarms of Insect *Pamphlets*, which the Press weekly spawns into the World, and particularly the *Nativity* of that *Folio-Impertinence* which occasions our present Reflections; A *Peice* whose *flaming Title* raised our thoughts to an expectation of somewhat extraordinary; But finding little in it but down-right *Abuse*, The Quintessence of *Billingsgate Rhetorick* Dreggs of *Canning*, and such *Rubbish Language*, as *Bubbling*, *Bully-Rock*, *Fluxing*, *Gonorrhoea*, &c. Charity it self could not but suspect the Authour more conversant somewhere else then in *Coffee-houses*, and conclude those places being too *Civil* for a debauch'd Humour, had given occasion for his exposing them As *Lay-Conventicles*, &c.

However we shall preterve that equal regard to *Solomons* double-fac'd advice, To *Answer* and not *Answer* such as our characterizing Authour, That we shali decline *Returning* any thing particularly to his scurrilities; Let the *Town-wits* (whom we leave to take his own satisfaction)

Fence with him if he please at those Weapons; a formall *Answer* would be too great an Indulgence to his Vanity, and make him think too considerably of himself; Besides to reply in the pittyful stile of his *peevish Drollery* is to engage in a Game at *Push-pin*, And to say any thing serious will be no more (to borrow his Phrase) than reading a *Lecture to a Monkey*; In stead therefore of wasting our *Time* or the Readers *Time* so impertinently, We shall briefly endeavour to give you an Account of the *Use and Vertues* of *Coffee*, and next consider some of those many *inconveniences* Coffee-houses afford us both for *business and conversation*.

Though the happy *Arabia*, Natures *spicery* prodigally furnishes the voluptuous World with all kind of *Aromatics* and divers other Rarities, yet I scarce know whether Mankind be not still as much oblig'd to it for the excellency of the humble *Coffee-plant*. As for many others of its more specious productions, For since there is nothing we here enjoy next to Life valuable beyond *Health*, certainly those things that contribute to preserving us in good *plight*, and *temperasy* and fortifie our weak bodies against the continual Assaults and Batteries of *Diseases* deserve our regards much more, than Those which only gratify a liquorish Palat, or otherwise prove subservient to our delights; As for this *salutiferous Berry*, of so general a Use through all the Regions of the *East*, 'tis sufficiently known when prepared to be moderately hot and of a very drying attenuating and cleansing Quality, whence Reason infers That its decoction must contain many good *Physical properties*, and cannot but be an incomparable Remedy to dissolve *Crudities*, comfort the *Brain*, and dry up all *Humours* in the *Stomach*, In brief to prevent or redress in those that frequently drink it All cold drowzy *Rheumatisms* which are so pernicious that but to name them would Tire the Tongue of a *Mountebank*.

This consideration alone should methinks be sufficient to Ingratiate it to our *Estem*, since the use thereof does thence appear absolutely necessary, especially to us in whom *Phlegm* is apt to abound both by reason of the *Northerly* situation of our *Country*, and the ill habit of extraordinary drinking grown too Epidemicall among us.

Experience proves; That there is nothing more effectual than this reviving Drink to restore their senses that have Brutified themselves by immoderate Tipling heady Liquors which it performs by its *expectant* property before-mentioned, that instantly dries up that cloud of giddy Fumes which boyling up from the over-charged *Stomach*, oppresses the *Brain*; But this being only a kindness to voluntary *Dizels* (as my Lord Cook calls common Drunkards) we should scarce reckon amongst *Coffee's* virtues did it not evidence us quality and shew how beneficial it may prove by parity of Reason, when designed to more worthy and noble Uses, Such as expelling Wind, fortifying the *Liver*, refreshing the *Heart*, Corroborating the *Spirits*, both *Vital* and *Animal*, quickning the *Appetite*, assisting *Digestion*, helping the *Stone*, raking away *Rheums* and *Defluxions*, with a thousand other kindnesses to Nature, which we might Enumerate, did we not think it a sufficient Argument of its Excellency only to observe, How Universally it takes in the World, For we cannot without an Affront to our Nature imagine mankind so sottish As greedily to entertain a Drink that has nothing of sweetness to recommend it to the Gust, nor any of those pleasant blandishments wherewith Wine and other Liquors tempt and debauch our Palates, unless there were some more then ordinary virtue and efficacy in it, yet we see without any of these insinuating advantages, *Coffee* (has so generally prevail'd that *Evil* it self (though commonly with us voted the staff of Life) is scarce

scarce of so universal use, For of that the *Tartars* and *Arabians* vast and numerous people Eat little or none, whereas both they and the *Turks*, *Persians* and almost all the *Eastern World* are so devoted to *Coffee*, that besides Innumerable *Publick houses* for sale of it, There is scarce a private *Fire* without it all day long; As any that are but moderately acquainted with *Shashes* and *Turbans* can witness, Is it not enough to silence the Barking of our *Little Wars* against this Innocent and wholesome Drink That is so generally used by so many mighty *Nations*, and those too celebrated for the most witty and *Sagacious*.

Nor wants this Liquor the *Suffrages* of excellent Authors; The famous *Parkinson* in his exquisite *Herbal* p. 1622. commends it for the strengthening weak Stomacks, Helping digestion and obstructions, and Tumours of the Liver and Spleen; The Incomparable *Vesulani* in his *Natural History* fo. 155. amongst other encomiums asserts that it comforteth the Brain, and by condensing the Spirits expelleth fear and maketh them strong and chearful; *Sandy's* in his *Travels*, and the Judicious *Sir H. B.* both in his *Voyage to the Levant* and elsewhere speaks very advantageously of it, Nor did the Ingenious *Mr. Howel* in his Life time deny it his publick testimony in Print, In a Letter to *Mr. Just. R.* before his *Organon Salutis*;

After so many worthy *Names* have given it their Votes, what have our pious *Quiblers* to object? Only this, Tis black and therefore Wit must be shown to call it *Syrian Puddle*, And besides this, Tis bitter, and therefore a Lye must be fram'd, That it is made of *Soot*.

For the first, were they but so well acquainted with the *Prince of Latine Poets* As our *Club writer-maker* would make us believe he is with *Ovid* by his dull *seditions* and impertinent *Quarrels*, They might remember

Alba Ligustra cadunt, vaccinia Nigra Leguntur.

'Tis the opinion of better Heads than any on their Shoulders That this Liquor is no better than that famous *Black Broath* of the *Lacedemonians* so much celebrated by Antiquity.

For it's *Tast* 'tis a pitiful childish humour always to Indulge our Palates, Diseases are removed by bitter Pills, and the most sanative Potions are oft-times very ungrateful to swallow; But the truth is, this Drink has nothing in it of *Nauseousness*, nor any *Tast* but what familiariz'd by a little use will become pleasant and delightful.

The dull Planet *Saturn* has not finished one Revolution through his Orb since *Coffee-houses* were first known amongst us, yet 'tis worth our wonder to observe how *numerous* they are already grown, not only here in our *Metropolis*, but in both *Universities* and most *Cities* and eminent *Towns* throughout the Nation; Nor indeed have we any *Places* of entertainment of more use and general conveniency in several respects amongst us.

First, In regard of easie expence, being to wait for or meet a Friend, A *Tavern reckoning* soon breeds a *Purse-Consumption*, In an *Ale-house* you must gorge your self with *Pot*, after *Pot*, sit *solly alone* or be drawn in to *club* for others reckonings, be frown'd on by your *Landlady* As one that cumberes the house and hinders better Guests, But here for a penny or two you may spend 2 or 3 hours, have the shelter of a *House*, the warmth of a *Fire*, the diversion of *Company* and conveniency if you please of taking a Pipe of *Tobacco*, And all this without any grumbling or repining.

Secondly, For Sobriety, 'tis grown by the Ill Influences of I know not what *Hydroprick Stars*

almost a general custom amongst us, That no Bargain can be drove, or business concluded between Man and Man, but it must be transacted at some Publick House, This to Persons much concerned in the World must needs be very Injurious, should they always run to Taverns or Ale-houses, where continual sippings, though never so warily would be apt to fly up into their Brains, and render them drowsie and indisposed for business; Whereas having now the opportunity of a Coffee-house, they repair thither, take each Man a dish or two (so far from causing that it cures any diseases or disturbant Fumes) and so dispatching their business, go out more sprightly about their affairs then before; The like may be said of Mornings draughts which taken in Wine Ale or Beer, most times either destroy or very much mayhem the business of the whole day, whereas if people would be perswaded to play the Good-fellows in this wholesome wakeful Innocent drink, They would find it do no less good to their bodies, and much more promote and advance their business and Employments.

Lastly, For diversion, Tis older than Aristotle, and will be true when Hebs is forgot, that Man is a sociable creature, and delights in Company. Now whether shall a person wearied with hard study or the laborious turmoils of a tedious day repair to refresh himself, or where can young Gentlemen or Shop-keepers more Innocently and advantageously spend an hour or two in the Evening then at a Coffee-house; where they shall be sure to meet Company, and by the custome of the house not such as at other places stingy and reserved to themselves, but free and communicative, where every Man may modestly begin his story, and propose to, or Answer another as he thinks fit; Discourse is Pabulum Amicitiae, cos Ingenij, The minds best Diet, and the great Wet-stone and Incentive of Ingenuity, By that we come to know Men better than by their Physiognomy's, Loquere utte videam speak that I may see thee, was the Philosophers Adage, To read Men is acknowledged more useful then Books, but where is there a better Library for that study generally than Here, amongst such a variety of Humours all expressing themselves on divers subjects according to their respective Abilities?

But our Pamphlet-monger (that spatters out senceless Characters faster than any Hocus can vomit Inckle) will needs take upon him to be dictator of all Society, and confine company to sit as mute in a Coffee-house As a Quaker at a silent meeting, or himself with a little Wench when behind the Hangings they are playing a Game at Whist, To this purpose he babbles mightily against Tattling, and makes a great deal of cold mirth with three or four stale Humours that you may find a thousand times better described in a hundred old Plays, yet to collect those excellent observables cost the poor Soul above half a years time in painful Pilgrimage from one Coffee-house to another, where planting himself in a dark corner with the dexterity of short-hand he recorded these choice Remarks, whilst all the Town took him for an Excise-man counting the number of dishes; the World is now obliged with the fruits of his Industry, which proves no more then that some giddy-headed Coxcombs like himself (whose Skulls instead of Brains are stuf with Saw-dust) do sometimes intrude into Coffee-houses, A doctrine we are easily perswaded to believe, For if their doors had been kept shut against all Fops 'tis more than probable Himself had never known so much of their Humours, We confess In multiloquio non desit vanitas amongst so much Talk there may happen some to very little purpose, But as we doubt not but the Royal Proclamation has had the good success to prevent for the future any dangerous Intelligence sawcy prying into Arcana Imperij or Irrelevant reflections on Affairs of State, so for the little Innocent Extravagancies we hold them very divertising, Every Fool being a Fiddle to the Company, for how else should our

Author

Author have raised so much *laughter* through the Town? Besides how infinitely are the *vain pratings* of these ridiculous Pragmaticks over-balanced by the *sage and solid Reasonings*. Here frequently to be heard of *Experienced Gentlemen*, *Judicious Lawyers*, able *Physicians*, *Ingenious Merchants*, and understanding *Citizens*, In the abstrusest points of *Reason*, *Philosophy*, *Law* and publick *Commerce*?

In brief 'tis undeniable That as you have here the most *civil* so 'tis generally the most *Intelligent Society*, The frequenting whose *Converse*, and observing their *Discourses* and *Departments* cannot but *civilize* our manners, enlarge our *understandings*, refine our *Language*, teach us a *generous confidence* and handsome *Manner of Address*; And brush off that *Protr Submissiveness* (As I remember *Tully* somewhere calls it) That clownish kind of *modesty*, frequently incident to the best *Natures*, which renders them *Sheepish* and *Ridiculous* in company.

So that upon the whole matter, spight of the idle *Sarcasms* and paltry reproaches thrown upon it, we may with no less truth than plainness give this brief *Character* of a well regulated *Coffee-house* (for our Pen daidains to be *Advocate* for any sordid holes that assume that *Name* to cloak the *Practice of Debauchery*) That it is

The *Sanctuary of Health*,
The *Nursery of Temperance*,
The *Delight of Frugality*,
An *Academy of Civility*,
AND
Free-School of *Ingenuity*,

FINIS.

After a few minutes I was led to the Town Hall, where I was introduced to the Mayor, the Town Clerk, and the members of the Town Council. They were all very friendly and showed me the various parts of the Town Hall, including the Town Council Chamber, the Town Clerk's Office, and the Town Hall Library. I was also shown the Town Hall records, which were very old and interesting.

In the afternoon I went to the Town Hall and saw the Town Council in session. They were discussing the Town Hall records, which were very old and interesting. I was also shown the Town Hall Library, which was very large and well-stocked. I was also shown the Town Hall records, which were very old and interesting.

So far up to the whole matter, I have been very much interested in the Town Hall records, which were very old and interesting. I was also shown the Town Hall Library, which was very large and well-stocked. I was also shown the Town Hall records, which were very old and interesting.

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